

WHAT IS SADDLE MOUNTAIN WORTH TO THIS COMMUNITY

By Kiwanian August Hildebrand, Park Commissioner of Astoria and Member of the Angoria Hiking Club

Some years ago I was fortunate enough to listen to a lecture given by Russell H. Conwell at the old Methodist church in Astoria. The subject was "Acres of Diamonds," and the talk impressed me very much. Some of you may have heard it, or read the book, as this lecture is also obtainable in printed form. For the information of those who are not acquainted with the subject I wish to say in explanation that it is the story of a young man who sells his father's farm located somewhere in or near Persia, searches for diamonds in various countries, and finally arrives in despair and without riches at the end of the world. Meanwhile the farm which he thought barren of value and sold, became in reality one of the richest diamond producing mines in the world—under someone else's ownership and management—of course.

When we think of the city of Seaside, our memory sees ocean beach and ocean bathing etc. This is correct. On account of our even tempered climate Seaside is steadily forging ahead as an ocean health resort. Take the beach resort part away from Seaside and that city would be very much reduced in size—in fact it would not have a much larger population than Nehalem City, Warrenton, Jewell, Burnside, Svenson, Knappa or even Westport. All these little settlements or cities are within the confines of our county. It is safe to make the deduction that Seaside has on the average 3000 more inhabitants than the average of the places or settlements mentioned; and these 3000 can be attributed to the ocean beach attraction. In other words if the beach attraction would be taken away from Seaside, the population would soon be reduced by at least 3000.

Seaside and Astoria are twin cities so to speak and the prosperity of Seaside reflects itself in Astoria. Astoria and Seaside are in fact one economic unit.

Let us do a little reasoning; there are cities that are ocean health resorts—and there are cities that are mountain health resorts. By our fostering, encouraging and advertising the mountains, streams and timbered sections of Clatsop county, we add materially to our wealth of attractions. 3000 people added to Clatsop county by means of our ocean beach attraction means about 1000 homes, farms, gardens, and houses of an easy value of \$5000 each. This then gives us an added value to Seaside, to Clatsop county, to Astoria, of 5 million dollars. If you are going to let me figure out the additional value if through advertising our mountain attractions we add 3000 inhabitants to Clatsop county.

From this it is easily seen that Saddle Mountain in itself is an asset to our community that may be figured out in dollars and cents. Many localities, if it could be done, would spend millions to create a Saddle Mountain in their particular surroundings. As it is, we have it—and it is for us to make this mountain accessible by means of trails and roads so as to realize the utmost value. This monetary value is like compound interest it accumulates, as time goes on, by leaps and bounds. The inattention we give to pointing out the separate scenic sections of this mountain; to the Spring of Youth on its top; to the sleeping Lion, formed by the very crown of the mountain; to the Devil's Kitchen; to the craggy nature of the Chimney through which one passes on the ascent; to the stone walls that were created by volcanic action; to the snowy cross that forms in the winter on account of the Spring of water overflowing; to the figure of the "Lorelei" formed on the Western face of the mountain; to the ever present many colored flowers; to the beautiful sight one beholds from its pinnacle; to the bracing air one experiences above the lower levels etc.—the more value we keep from it.

We are indeed fortunate to have a hiking club in Astoria that draws attention to our mountain scenery. I have been along on some of these trips and I assure you they are enjoyable. It is due to this club's initiative that trails are opened up to the places of attraction. I venture to say that our three main trails and attractions—The Gnat Creek Falls, the Tillamook Head Trail, and Saddle Mountain—compare very favorably with any mountain scenery elsewhere. There are the lesser peaks

and attractions; Sugar Loaf Mountain, with its top rock-planned, even more romantic than Saddle Mountain to some; the Nehalem Trail near Nehalem Falls offering its lure; Necanicum Mountain, Silver Point Cliffs, Arch Cape, Cape Disappointment to the north of the Columbia river etc.

It should be our aim to capitalize these places, and make them more accessible every year after man trails. Next in order are horse trails, and eventually roads.

Saddle Mountain, being the premier peak of our cluster of mountains, of course receives the most attention, but there are many other peaks, and prominent points, that offer health and sight seeing, sites and attractions. We are indeed fortunate that in this part of the globe, in which the Almighty has placed us, there is contained such a variety of nature's creations—it is a marvel that not more people take notice of this.

Let us see: We have the largest ocean, one of the largest rivers of our globe, smaller rivers, creeks, brooklets and springs.

We have the high lands.
We have the low lands.
We have mountains.
We have sandy dunes in our front yard.

We have fertile gardens and farms in our back yards.

Within a radius of one hundred miles we can travel from scorching sands through cool forests and from great farmlands to snow fields.

It should be our aim to foster and build trails and roads to all of our attractive mountain tops, promontories, waterfalls and other attractive places. These roads and trails should all start from two common points in Clatsop county:—Astoria and Seaside. These should, for the most part, be fire warden trails, or lead over parts of the country that are or could be of use to the fire warden patrol. In that case the fire patrol department would aid materially in keeping the trails open.

It should also be our aim to have these trails officially acknowledged by our county authorities as existent and to have them marked as such on all county maps.

Last fall I happened to be on the ocean beach near the Twelfth street bridge at Seaside. A man near me had in his possession two silverside salmon. I asked him where he caught them and he said, "At the mouth of the Necanicum river a school of fish was ascending the stream. (At low tide one may wade across the creek or river where it flows over the sands into the ocean) there I kicked a couple of fish out of the water!" This man had rubber boots on and did not even get wet.

While we were talking and admiring the fish, along came two hunters with three ducks. Soon someone joined us who had dug some clams, and another party had a few crabs. A woman had gathered an armful of fuzzy wood and bark—another party had a basket of edible mushrooms and still another had berries. Another enthusiastic fisherman was angling for deep sea fish in the surf—and I myself had picked up that morning a perfectly good and live Spanish mackerel which had been stranded on the beach, evidently chased there by seals. Wending my way home to our cottage I saw some boys angling for tom cods, a little edible fish, on the bridge that crosses the Necanicum river.

There are not many places on our globe which offer so many diversified attractions and resources as our section and I am going to emphasize "Our."

Many of us are like that farmer boy who sold his ranch to look for diamonds in the other more distant pastures. Many of us will try to pluck the stars from heaven and neglect to see the daisies and violets that are at our feet. This in reference to scenic beauty spots as well as to Natural Resources.

I admire the spirit of Seaside. The ocean promenade is aiding immensely in drawing visitors. The other Sunday while walking around there I happened to go into the Auto Camping park, a well kept, clean and especially favorably located spot. I was told by the keeper that last year there had been 600 autos at one time, in one day, and that many more could be taken care of as twenty-one acres of ground was as yet held in reserve.

There is one feature which, to my notion, is not enough thought of at Seaside,—and that is the water boating part of its rivers. The rivers are ideal for boating parties, scull races, water carnivals etc. This should not be spoiled by too many bridges or bridges too low and of narrow spans. In former years I was in favor of a canal connecting the Columbia river with the rivers at Seaside. While the railroad and highway have taken away the urgent necessity for this enterprise, I nevertheless believe that even now such a canal would be of immense value to our section. It may interest some of you to know that the late Senator C. W. Carnahan started such a canal and that there is now water connection by canal through the Skipanon river as far as Cullaby Lake.

It may also be of interest for most of you to know that this county has mineral springs. These are located in the middle Nehalem Valley, and one near Young's River Falls. In earlier days thousands of wild pigeons were attracted to these. I see no reason why thousands of persons may not be attracted to them now, with proper attention, care, and advertising.

These springs should be exploited. If no other department is to take care of them they should be taken over by the county agent under the head of "Spring Farming." No satire whatsoever is intended!

It should also be our aim to continually advertise by word of mouth and otherwise our places of attractions, especially to strangers. This should not only cover mountain scenery—boost anything we have here from Royal Chinook to clams and crabs—from the Pacific ocean and the Columbia River to the tiny lakes on Clatsop plains and in our mountains. Tell any stranger that he must visit Seaside. Talk about our even-tempered climate, tell that the baby mortality is the lowest of the lowest in the U. S.—Speak of our duck hunting grounds—boost our part of the Columbia River Highway. Mention that our hills are green the year around and tell the world that this is a great dairying country—tell that this is a wonderful chicken farm country,—also for cranberries.

And yes—tell them that the surface of the Columbia River brings in more wealth, acre for acre, than any wheat land in Minnesota or Dakota. Explain how we raise young salmon, all the same as baby chicks, sheep or calves—with this difference—that after the salmon eggs are hatched in incubators, the young fish are kept just a little while to give them a start in life. We send the youngsters out into the wide, wide ocean to their feeding pastures—they know the way—when they are mature and ready to be eaten—all the same as a mature steer, grown lamb or a fatted hog—they seem to know the way back to say to us: "Here we are, take us please."

Tell everyone that a matured salmon weighs as much as a mutton, and that pound for pound it is worth more. We do not seem to realize ourselves the marvelous workings of nature in our favor. We do not appreciate the wonderful privilege of living in a locality which offers such opportunities. Just think of it a moment. Millions of fish sent out to the ocean without a keeper or herder—no taxes to pay on their value, no taxes to pay on the pastures, no worrying as to their welfare; simply get your nets ready when they come and take them in!

It is marvelous in its workings; it is stupendous in its vastness; it is ridiculous in its simplicity. It is with reverence that one must behold the workings of nature, the workings of the Almighty for our benefit.

Salmon came into my theme of mountain attraction. I can say without fear of contradiction that the salmon is a mountain produce fish. Low land streams do not produce salmon. It is therefore proper to mention the abundance of fish with which the Pacific coast is blessed on account of the mountains.

Again it should be mentioned that very few trees grow in level and prairie countries. Therefore we may also mention the vast wealth of timber we have at our very doors. Our mountains are covered with trees. You may easily see that Saddle Mountain is a distinct asset to our country. In fact, our ranges of mountains are what make our climate, our natural resources, our wealth and our health.